CITY OF SEQUIM

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
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TOP10 TIPS FOR LAND USE PERMITTING SUCCESS

Number 1. **Apply for a Pre-Application Meeting** (if required). Pre-application meetings are required for most land use proposals and are also available for those looking for assistance with project feasibility, zoning questions, or application requirements before submitting a formal permit application. They allow the applicant to explain the proposal and hear feedback from Staff, as well as understand permitting requirements prior to application submittal. For submittal requirements, please view our checklist. To apply for a pre-app, please visit our portal.

Number 2. **Plan and apply for permits early.** Often, especially with land use cases, applications, and the additional materials needed (e.g., engineered design plans) require the assistance of an environmental consultant or a professional engineer. The cost of having an experienced consultant to prepare necessary documents can save the applicant time, money, and frustration.

Number 3. **Seek to understand** the permitting process and development requirements. The most common permit issues occur when applications aren't submitted correctly or a project doesn't comply with requirements. Familiarize yourself with the applicable code chapters related to your project.

Number 4. **File complete permit applications**. All application forms have checklists that help ensure that all of the needed information is addressed and the required materials are submitted. Incomplete documents and/or submittals require revisions which pause the review cycle and can lengthen the permitting process significantly.

Number 5. **Be consistent**. Be sure that all of your application documents agree with each other. For example, the civil drawings should match the site plan and the landscaping plan.

Number 6. **Avoid impacts to critical areas**. Avoiding or minimizing impacts to critical areas (wetlands, steep slopes, fish and wildlife habitat) may reduce the number of permits required and save you both time and money. Environmental regulations require significant reporting and (typically) mitigation for critical area impacts.

Number 7. **Promptly respond to Staff and check your portal dashboard frequently**. Respond promptly to additional information requests. The faster you respond, the faster the permit reviewer can continue to process the permit.

Number 8. **Be flexible and collaborative through design challenges**. During the permit process, staff may have suggestions on how to meet code requirements in different ways than proposed. These changes may lead to quick review times and hopefully, a better project.

Number 9. **Manage your consultants.** Engaged owners improve project success. Give consultants detailed direction, clear feedback, and the resources that they need to work efficiently.

Number 10. **Ask for help.** Sometimes applicants find themselves lost among all the information and paperwork and become overwhelmed or frustrated. Permitting Staff make it their job to have the permit process go as smoothly as possible. If you find yourself totally stuck, ask for help!